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PERSUASIVE

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TO

RESIGNATION

UNDER

AFFLICTIONS,

on the CONSIDERATION of our

SAVIOR'S

SUFFERINGS FOR *US.*

BY WAY OF LETTER TO A NEAR FRIEND.

Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

And not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope: and hope maketh not aſhamed; becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt which is given us——

1 Peter i. 5.

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation——

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(Price two Pence.)

My dear ✻ ✻ ✻.

YOUR Letters, with my apprehenſions of what you labor under, pierce my ſoul with pain. They cauſe me to pour it forth in prayer to GOD, on your behalf. I would talk with you. What ſhall I ſay? Was I to fill a hundred ſheets, it will not avail, unleſs the LORD accompany it with his bleſſing. But let us pray and hope he will bleſs our feeble eſſay. To begin then.

Did our Savior do and ſuffer ſo much for us, and ſhall we ſo heavily complain? Did the eternal Word, for us leave his Father's boſom, for a time lay aſide his glory, to aſſume, to take our nature, that he might ſatisfy that juſtice which no finite Being could, and render that obedience to GOD's holy law, which mere man, by ſin was for ever diſabled to do? Was the Redeemer of the World, who could have had all things obedient to his will and deſire, was this glorious GOD-Man afflicted, and without a place 'where to lay his head'? Was he for us expoſed to the malice of Satan, and the World; and reviled; and ſcourged? Were his hands, and his feet that went about doing good, nailed to the Croſs? Did this all perfect, ſpotleſs Lamb of GOD, bear the mockery of man, the ſcorn of ſatan and his crew, and above all, the wrath of a juſtly incenſed GOD, for man's ſin, original and actual; that wrath, which the collected ſtrength of all created Beings could not have ſtood under? Was this JEHOVAH JESUS rudely hoiſted in the air? did Immanuel freely bleed, languiſh, and die for us? And ſhall we, who are covered with, and full of ſin, ſo peeviſhly bear, murmur, and in thought repine at a few afflictions and ſufferings? Did he for our ſakes ſo chearfully ſubmit himſelf as man to the will of GOD, and ſhall not we, for whoſe ſakes he did and ſuffered ſo much, comply with his bleſſed, heavenly, and all perfect will? How ſhould we anſwer, if we were to be aſked: Did I ſuffer ſo much for you, and can you not for my ſake, bear a few afflictions, a few troubles, diſappointments, and ſorrows? Per-

Permit me to repeat. Nothing happens to us but by permiſſion, and according to the will of GOD. And will he who is goodneſs itſelf permit any thing to happen to us, but what is for our good, though perhaps grievous to the fleſh?

Until we are enabled to reſign and ſubmit our wills and ourſelves to the will of GOD in all chriſtian obedience, and endeavor to receive chearfully every diſpenſation of his providence towards us (though diſagreeable to our nature) we ſhall never be fit to die, nor to enjoy that bleſſed reſt he is preparing, and will provide for us, if we are found in his Son, not having our own righteouſneſs, but the righteouſneſs of GOD in CHRIST, that which is through the faith of CHRIST, the righteouſneſs which is of GOD by faith; the fruit of which is peace, quietneſs, and aſſurance for ever.

Does he not ſay? If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs daily, and follow me. If you will come after me, muſt be underſtood to include, being with him in a ſtate of glory in heaven. And is as much as to ſay, If you wiſh to be happy for ever with me, in the preſence of GOD, and his angels, and ſaints in heaven, you muſt chearfully endeavor to ſubmit to, and take up any croſs or affliction I may call you to bear and ſuffer for my ſake, though this ſhould happen daily—to be with me hereafter, you muſt follow me in my ſufferings here—you muſt deny yourſelf. And that not only in things not lawful, but in things lawful; if your endeavors to attain them are oppoſed by the will of GOD.

Our nature, or ſenſe ſays. How happy ſhould I be, had I ſuch and ſuch things. If I was in ſuch or ſuch a ſituation. If I was delivered from ſuch a calamity. From this trouble which now overwhelms me. From this want, from this diſtreſs that now ſurrounds me. GOD ſays, by his providence and word, theſe things are not expedient for you, there-

fore in much goodneſs and mercy I deny them to you. It is in my power to make theſe ſeeming afflictions productive of much good and peace to your ſoul, in weaning you from earthly, and raiſing you to heavenly things. And with the aid of my law, and by the convictions of my Spirit, they ſhew you your weakneſs, and in time your ſpiritual wants, the urgent need you have of a Savior, and of applying to GOD, in, through, and by him, for mercy and forgiveneſs, for acceptance and peace. They alſo ſhew you the vanity of all ſublunary objects, all earthly purſuits; and are frequently made uſe of as means to unlooſe the cords which bind your affections to things below me, the ſupreme good, your covenant GOD. If you do not forfeit your right to ſuch privileges, in croſſing my good providence towards you by your ſinful complaints, and murmurings of heart.

Though ſufferings, though afflictions are grievous to be borne, yet thank GOD, if they are ſanctified to us, and we are enabled to bear them as our Savior would have us, having him ſtill in memory and view, they are better for us than the greateſt treaſures, and comforts, and conveniencies of life. For as fire is to gold, ſo are ſanctified afflictions to our ſouls. They come forth purified from their droſs and tin; they are by ſanctification of the holy Spirit, through faith in the obedience, ſufferings, and death of JESUS CHRIST, prepared for a more happy ſtate: the ſtate which our bleſſed Redeemer and Savior invites us to in the words we have mentioned—'if you will come after me, take up your croſs daily, and follow me'.

We ſhould pray to GOD the Father, for JESUS his dear Son's ſake, to ſanctify by the holy Spirit, every diſpenſation of his providence towards us. Whether proſperity or adverſity, health or ſickneſs, temptation or peace. And to ſet our hearts right, and give us a true judgment as to all things. Then we ſhall through this Grace and favor, eſteem and value things, not according to outward appearance, but

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in proportion as they advance the glory of GOD, and the good of our immortal ſouls. Did we but know to what end GOD ſuffers us to be afflicted, we ſhould rejoice. But if fleſh and blood will cry out— LORD, do thou poſſeſs our ſouls in patience; and enable us to reſign and give ourſelves wholly up to thy Fatherly correction, and to praiſe and bleſs thee for all other mercies and bleſſings thou art continually beſtowing on and favoring us with.

How ſhall we know whether afflictions are ſanctified to us? They are, if in the hands, if by the Grace of the holy Spirit they bring us to acknowlege, we deſerve infinitely worſe puniſhment. This ſuppoſes a ſight of ſin, and a deſire of pardon; or in other terms. This Grace of GOD ſoftens our hearts into a ſenſe of our repeated provocations againſt him, the juſt, and moſt holy GOD; will ſhew us how full of wickedneſs and corruption we are; and that we have no help in ourſelves, or in any finite good.

Where then ſhall we flee for help, for pardon, and peace? 'Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt'. A perſon may anſwer. I cannot believe. Indeed we cannot ſavingly, without a new heart, and a new ſpirit. What ſays the word of GOD? 'A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you; and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and will give you a heart of fleſh'. 'Faith is the gift of GOD'. Our dear Lord ſays. 'without me ye can do nothing'. What ſhall be done then? 'Lord, draw me, and I will run after thee'. Enable me to believe, and I will believe. I am in thy hands, make me what thou wouldſt have me to be. Not my will, Lord, but thine be done.

Lord God, look upon me as being in thy Son. How can I bear to think of thee, but as thou art in Chriſt, my Redeemer? In him, thou art all love, all compaſſion, out of him a conſuming fire. If I have the little thought of, and leſs experienced honor of being in Chriſt, what wilt thou not do for me? No good thing wilt thou with-hold from me.

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That is. What GOD ſees good for us, not what we judge ſo. For if we are of the happy number of thoſe that ſhall follow the Lamb whither ſoever he goeth. When we are at reſt and freed from the indwelling power and being of ſin, ſolacing in the Fountain of love, and feeding on the delights of the Boſom of our heavenly Father; when without ſatiety, without pain, without anxiety, without fear of abſence, we ſhall view, and gaze with enraptured delight on the infinite variety of the beauties of the GOD-MAN, ſhining in the faces of the innumerable company of his Redeemed— all their graces, lovelineſs, and beauty, being in, and communicated by him their head — I ſay, when 'GOD ſhall be all in all', we ſhall know, that what we in this world think good, is next to the worſt of evils, ſin itſelf, (the cauſe of all miſery) as a temptation leading to it: and what we are apt to think evil, we ſhall find to be good.

But if afflictions harden our hearts, and make us dead to the things of GOD, it is a bad ſign, a very bad ſign. Let us beg power and ſtrength of GOD, that we may flee for our lives to the ſtrong Hold, even CHRIST JESUS the LORD, the rock of eternal ages. Then, though ſtorms and tempeſts ariſe; though our wicked deceitful hearts, and unbelief (which to me is the worſt of ſins, and, with the ſins I would have committed, had I not been reſtrained by Grace, make me the greateſt ſinner) though theſe, with Satan, and all the powers of Earth and Hell, ſhould be up in arms againſt us, yet fixed upon this Rock, having faith in this only Deliverer, we ſhall ſtand firm; and ſmile at all their devices.

Walking in a garden in rather ſevere weather, I ſaw a beautiful variegated plant with drooping head, and leaves falling down around it, and to appearance ſcarce more life in it than to give one room to ſay it was alive; but looking more attentively, the heart was found to be ſound. A few weeks more, and the ſun's invigorating rays will raiſe it's drooping head,

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and make it appear in all it's native beauty. Thus the gracious ſoul, when GOD's chaſtening hand is upon her, ſeems to be drooping, dying, dead. But JESUS—the ſame to her (and infinitely more ſo) as the heart to animal, and the ſun to vegetable life—her Savior, her Heart, her Head is alive. And though it ſhould be a long winter, a continued winter with her, yet in a few years, perhaps months, weeks, days, minutes, or ſeconds, he her Sun will ariſe on her 'with healing under his wings,' diſpel the intercepting clouds, and make her beautiful, lovely, and happy.

The apoſtle Paul ſays, and with him every experimental chriſtian can ſay, 'When I would do good, evil is preſent with me.' The good I have a will to perform, is tinctured and defiled with ſin. For if I have any good thoughts, if I do any good thing, perform any good action, Pride (the firſt ſin) inſtantly raiſes it's head, and ſpits forth it's poiſon; ſo that in the very act of thinking, or of doing good, I commit ſin. Is not this an affliction to one that loves the LORD JESUS? Yea. But ought we not to be thankful, the Lord ſhews us what thouſands cannot ſee, namely, the enmity between the natural man and the holineſs of God? And glory be to him for appointing, and by the holy Spirit revealing and applying the remedy—the Blood of Chriſt—for the purpoſe of cleanſing us from this and every other ſin, and ſoul diſeaſe. Yes, 'thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.'

Very often, Satan's temptations, and ſuggeſtions, are a very ſevere and grievous affliction to the children of God. But the word of God ſays, 'all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.' If having faith, we look to and depend on God in Chriſt for deliverance, we ſhall never be diſappointed. For though Satan is ſtrong, very ſtrong, very powerful (I have experienced his power) yet my Jeſus, the ſtronger One, clothed in, and armed with the power of the

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Godhead, has but the word to give, and the thunderings of Satan's power, rage and malice, are ſtill; calmneſs and peace enſue. And if the tempeſt ſhould be high, and we obliged to continue in it, he will be with us, and ſtrengthen us according to our day, and according to his precious promiſes. Then how much reaſon have the Lord's people not to fear; eſpecially when he himſelf forbids them, by ſaying 'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.'

One of the ejected Miniſters in king Charles the ſecond's time, who had all his goods taken from him, and was more than once turned out of his houſe, and perſecuted, had theſe ſayings. 'I have loſt eſtate, relations, and health, and yet God is my God ſtill—'tis better to be preſerved in brine, than to rot in honey.' Oh! how did many of theſe dear and precious men of God and their families ſuffer! The huſband torn from the wife and children, impriſoned, and abuſed; whilſt ſome had the honor of following their Lord and Maſter in his deſtitute ſtate, namely, without a place where to lay their heads. Yet God wrought wonderful deliverances for them; and though they ſuffered outwardly, and in perſon, he gave them peace inwardly; the peace of God, from experience of forgiveneſs and remiſſion of ſins, through the precious blood of Chriſt: the faith in Chriſt, which is of the operation of the holy Spirit, producing a hope of the pardon of, and a truſt of ſalvation from all ſin. This peace exceeds all worldly poſſeſſions, and enjoyments, of whatever nature they may be. What would riches, fine, decent, and comfortable habitations be, without this peace? Worſe than the abſence, the want of all-created good, with it. Earthly honor, applauſe of man, ſect, or party of men, every known created good, or eſteemed good, ſhall paſs away, and like a ſhadow leave no mark; but this peace ſhall never paſs away—it is not to be deſcribed, it is inexpreſſible, it paſſeth all human underſtanding.

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With this, or poſſeſſed of this peace, what ſhall diſtreſs us? 'Who, what ſhall ſeperate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation? or diſtreſs? or perſecution? or famine? or nakedneſs? or peril? or ſword?' ſhall the fiery darts of Satan's temptations? which meeting with ſuitable corruption in the heart, the magazine of ſin, ſets it on fire to the great annoyance and diſtreſs of our ſouls; ſhall pain and ſickneſs? ſhall ridicule, ſcorn, contempt from man; ſupercilious, imperious behavior from ſuperiors? Does not the word of God ſay to this effect? Nay, in all theſe things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, and gave himſelf for us, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me, through him the glorious, the almighty, yet the meek and lowly, and to believers the precious, the lovely, dear Jeſus, Immanuel; my Lord, and my God.

We have generally if not always ſome end in view different from that for which we were created. This is proved by man's runing into ſuch variety of purſuits. But as God has infinitely more power over us, than the Potter has over the clay, he will not be diſappointed of his end in our creation, namely, his own glory. What wiſdom, what goodneſs may be diſcovered in his ſending afflictions. He does not willingly afflict. But from the nature of things (as he hath made us rational creatures) nothing can be better calculated, than the means, which he condeſcends to make uſe of, to reclaim his erring and ſtraying people. If we knew the honor confered upon, and the good meant us by theſe, it would make us ſo intent in the contemplation of what is in ſtore for God's people, we ſhould ſcarce afford our afflictions a thought; they would through Grace be light, and but for a moment; we ſhould by the teleſcope of faith, look through, look over them and every thing elſe to our eternal reſt.

Then our conflicts with Self, Sin, Satan, and the World, all our diſtreſſes, and troubles, of whatever nature

nature they may be, will not only be tolerable, but we ſhall rejoice that we are counted worthy of the honor of having a part in filling up, in completing (if I may ſo expreſs it) the ſufferings of the Lamb of God. 'For unto you it is given in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe on him, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake.'

But ſuppoſe my afflictions are ſo great as to bring me to death? 'They are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.' We ſhould not mention or think any thing of them, when compared with the greatneſs of the bliſs and happineſs we ſhall hereafter enjoy. And ſee the many comfortableand encouraging promiſes and words of Scripture. Take only this one ſentence, count, ſum up if you can, it's ineſtimable, it's inexhauſtible riches (it has been great comfort and ſupport to me) 'Though my heart and my fleſh fail, yet God—in Chriſt—is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'

You muſt excuſe any tautology which the anxious deſire for the welfare of your precious, immortal ſoul, may make me run into, and permit me to obſerve.

I can from experience ſay, I cannot of myſelf either believe, repent, ſubmit, or obey. Then let us beſeech the Father of mercies, for his dear Son, our elder Brother's ſake, to work in, and give us by his moſt holy Spirit, faith and repentance; and a chearful ſpirit of ſubmiſſion, and reſignation in all things, to his bleſſed, pure, divine, and all perfect will.

And thou adorable and glorious Triune Lord God, do thou enable and give me power, in deed and in truth, with ſincerity of ſoul, and all humility, to confeſs and declare. I have nothing, and without thee my God, I am nothing, and tend to nothing, but ſin and filthineſs—I a weak ſinful creature, have offended thee, the holy, infinite, and almighty God——Where, to what, to whom ſhall I flee from thy juſt vengeance? For they beloved Son's ſake give me power, give me ſtrength to flee into the City of refuge, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to lay hold of, and ſhelter myſelf under thy promiſes, and his my Savior's croſs.

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The thought—the firm faith—the aſſurance that thy Son my Savior hath ſatisfied thy infinite juſtice, by taking my nature upon him, and through the eternal Spirit freely offering himſelf up a ſacrifice for ſin to thee for my ſake, affords peace to my ſoul, and by the application of the holy Spirit removes the dread which kept me from thee, ſo that I can with humble boldneſs approach the Throne of Grace for pardon and peace——I am ſinful my God, but my Savior is without ſin—I am covered with the leproſy of ſin, but my Savior is ſpotleſs, and without ſin—My heart is deceitful, Oh my God, my heart is deceitful; it is a neſt of ſin and impurity; a ſink of iniquity; I know no wickedneſs it is not capable of; probe it with the ſword of thy Spirit, and it's corruption, it's ſinfulneſs will appear; but my Savior, my JESUS is Sincerity, his heart is pure, he is Innocence, he is holy, he is Truth itſelf; he is the Life by which I live, the Truth by which I am taught, the Way in which I would walk—Envy, hatred, malice, and revenge, dwell in my heart, but my Savior's, contains all that is amiable and lovely, it melts me into love to God, to Jehovah, as Father Son and Spirit, the eternal Aleim, three in One, and fills me with charity to all—Afflictions and ſorrows make me impatient, and my fleſh to cry out, but my Savior bore all meekly and patiently—I find all I can do is not ſufficient to give peace to my ſoul, but my Savior did all things perfectly, and hath purchaſed peace and happineſs for me—of myſelf, I cannot do any thing, I cannot obey thee my God in the leaſt thing, but my Savior hath done every thing, and perfectly obeyed thee in all things for me, and through him ſtrengthening me I can do all things; yea I can abound in and be zealous of good works, and yet give all the praiſe and glory to thee—Notwithſtanding I fear, yea do I not know? that pride and vain glory, and vanity, ſtill flutter round my heart, but the meekneſs and humility of my Savior, though clothed with power, teach me to be humble; and he by his Grace,

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by his Spirit ſweetly draws, ſweetly charms me into imitation—O my God, I am ſtill continually falling into error and ſin, but a Fountain is opened for ſin, and for uncleanneſs, in the body, and by the blood ſhedding of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, and my God—The fleſh, the World, Sin and Satan, faſten me down to earth, but my Savior hath conquered them, and broken their chains for me, and in his ſtrength, I ſhall in thy good time ſoar above them—Crowding temptations perplex and diſtreſs my ſoul, but my Savior hath been tempted in my ſtead, and for my ſake overcame many and grievous temptations, and through thy free Grace, in his ſtrength, encouraged by thy precious promiſes, I ſhall overcome temptation—I am empty, but my Savior is fulneſs itſelf, 'for in him all fulneſs dwells,' out of which my God, ſupply my manifold wants and neceſſities —— My righteouſneſs and attempted good ſtink, they are as filthy rags, but my Savior's righteouſneſs is of a ſweet ſmeling ſavor, it is complete, and acceptable to thee my God; and with his righteouſneſs, the only true wrought righteouſneſs, 'the beſt robe,' Lord cover my nakedneſs. So ſhall I be juſtified in thy ſight, and in my renewed, my new nature, be enabled to appear before thy glorious Triune majeſty, with humble boldneſs and confidence: for though my ſins are great, thy mercy and goodneſs in thy Son are infinitely greater, in as much as I am finite, and Thou, the Father Son and Holy Spirit three perſons and and one GOD art infinite.

Need there any apology for drawing you into this verbal confeſſion? I ſay verbal, becauſe we may make a confeſſion before almighty God of our ſin, we may admit the neceſſity of a Savior, and that a divine perſon in that character, called Jeſus Chriſt, has been upon Earth; that he died, roſe from the dead, and is aſcended into heaven; we may declare what a converted ſinner is ſaved from, what bleſſings he has in poſſeſſion, what bleſſings in expectancy; and yet, for want of that change in our hearts, which is of the o-

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peration of the holy Spirit, becauſe of the obedience, ſufferings, and death of the Son, we may be as far from the kingdom of God, as the young man in the Goſpel, who lacked but one thing (a new heart, and a new ſpirit) to make him comply with our bleſſed Lord's command. This change makes the Lord's children a willing people in the day he exerts this his power. Then by the ſweet influences of the holy Spirit, he by degrees * ſubdues every enemy, and all enmity in the heart, in the ſoul of man. And releaſing him from the Bondage into which Satan at the Fall ſeduced, and ſtill ſtrives to keep him in, the whole man is brought into the liberty of the children of God; that liberty the Lord JESUS has purchaſed for him. But do not think by this, I by any means wiſh to raiſe a ſuſpicion in my breaſt as to your intereſt in Chriſt; I would only wiſh to put you on the dutyof examination—'examine yourſelves whether you are in the faith'—no doubt Paul knew many of them to be in the faith; yet he alſo knew they could not attain too great an aſſurance, in a matter that will eternally concern us.

When beſet with trouble, and when under convictions of ſin, inſtead of fleeing to God in Chriſt; and receiving afflictions as a bage, as a mark of his love—for he ſays, 'As many as I love I rebuke and chaſten'—we are too apt to purſue earthly objects with a view of obtaining peace. This is very dangerous; for it often leads us to reſt in the creature, or in other words, in ſome created good; by which—if God does not hunt us from this our falſe covert, our falſe refuge, our falſe peace—we ſhall fall infinitely ſhort of happineſs.

This world, and it's objects, coming immediately under our ſenſes, the god of it, loſes no time to make the moſt of the advantage. He dazzles our eyes with a falſe gloſs of things; and works us up into a belief,

* I would be underſtood as to his uſual and common way of working.

that no good is like the preſent. But this is one of Satan's many deluſions. It is ſomething like the apples which are, by ſome, ſaid to grow where Sodom ſtood. To appearance they are beautiful; and ſo tempting, the perſon viewing them (if he is not undeceived) cannot forbear plucking one, but he no ſooner touches it, than it vaniſhes, or crumbles into a kind of aſhes. It only has an appearance, an outſide; emptineſs is within.

'Spiritual things are ſpiritually diſcerned.' And as we cannot ſee ſenſible objects without natural eyes, ſo we cannot diſcern ſpiritual things, 'till God gives us ſpiritual diſcernment.

The unconverted part of mankind do not ſtand alone, as to the deluſion we have mentioned; chriſtians are alſo hurried into, and continue under it, 'till the Lord JESUS anoints their eyes with the eye ſalve,' mentioned in the third of the Revelations. Then we can ſay with the Preacher. 'I looked on all the works my hands had wrought, and on the labor I had labored to do; and behold, all was vanity and vexation of ſpirit; and there was no profit under the Sun.' Then with wonder we aſk, with love and gratitude we praiſe, in ſome ſuch words as theſe—And was it for me, for me did my JESUS obey, ſuffer, bleed, and die? yes, for me he obeyed, ſuffered, bled, and died! Even I a vile ſinful worm, am the object of his love; it crowneth me victorious in Him my Lord and Savior. And why? For his name's ſake and glory, and becauſe he will have mercy. What ſhall I render to God for all his mercies? I will ſhow forth the praiſes of his love, his redeeming love. Praiſe him with me all ye his redeemed, ye ranſomed of the Lord; join O Heaven with all your hoſts; and O Earth with all thy animated forms, break forth into ſinging.

After all. afflictions, diſtreſs, and tribulation of ſome ſort or another, will more or leſs beſet us, till we are releaſed, and taken away from the being of ſin,

ſin, the body of death in which we are claſped. For as ſin, ſin original and actual, your ſins, my ſins were the crucifiers of the Lord of Life and Glory, and the cauſe of all his ſufferings; ſo ſin is the cauſe of all the pain, whether of body, or ſoul, that is felt and ſuffered on Earth; and that will be felt and ſuffered eternally, by thoſe who have deſpiſed who have rejected, who have ſlighted the overtures of mercy, in the way the great Jehovah, in his ſovereign wiſdom has thought proper to offer it to man; as well as by the open and profane ſinner, who ſwallows ſin as a ſweet morſel, and trades, and delights in it. How piercing to meditate on this! But it is no more than what the ſcriptures prove.

Let me ſuppoſe myſelf to be in a never dying ſtate, and that I only had a thorn in one of my fingers, without a proſpect, or hope of the pain ever ceaſing, how unhappy, how miſerable ſhould I be! But to be eternally in thoſe unabating pains, which the ſcripture, the word of truth declares ſhall be the eternal portion of the wicked, who can bear, who can dwell upon the thought?—Lord give me to know I am redeemed from this, by thy active, and paſſive obedience, and all ſufficient ſacrifice: leave me not without a hope of an intereſt in thee—How reviving the truſt, the belief, that our JESUS will not leave us, nor forſake us; but will be with us in the ſixth and the ſeventh, yea every trouble. Is not this encouragement that we 'ſhould both hope and quietly wait for the ſalvation of the Lord'? To wait for that period when we ſhall know he hath done, and doth do all things well: when our eternal weight of Glory, will render diminutive, and ſwallow up as light and trivial, the greateſt and moſt excruciating afflictions and pain any Being is capable of ſuffering. 'Therefore my beloved * * *, be you ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.'

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Permit me to conclude with commending you, and all the Lord's people, 'to God and to the word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are ſanctified.' Beſeeching the Father, in the name and for the ſake of the holy JESUS, to enlarge 'the Kingdom of our God, and of his Chriſt; that the earth may be filled with the knowlege of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea.' To which end Lord, do thou by the power of thy Spirit weaken, and in thy good and appointed time deſtroy the kingdoms of Satan, of Antichriſt, and of the falſe Prophet; pity their poor deluded ſubjects, and have mercy on thy ancient people the Jews; convince and convert their ſouls unto thee in Chriſt—Lord, have compaſſion on each and every individual of the houſehold of faith; unite them in love; and keep them from the power of the enemy which cometh in as a flood; prepare them for, and give them ſtrength, willingly, and chearfully to ſubmit, reſign, and give themſelves up wholly to thy will and pleaſure.

I am &c.

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* * * *Dec.* 1784.

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